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(WASHINGTON, DC) - President Bush has signed into law the Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act of 2009 with critical, new funding for multiple sclerosis (MS) research. The bill passed by Congress, contained \$5 million requested by Congressman Carnahan to research disturbing accounts that suggest increased risks among many U.S. veterans of developing multiple sclerosis.

"I am very hopeful these funds will help trigger life saving, and life altering research," said Congressman Carnahan.

Congressman Carnahan has been a tireless advocate for MS funding at the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) and led a multi-Member letter of support for the request, which garnered support from 63 Members of Congress. The Congressman believes that the Department of Defense has an obligation to fund this research because of preliminary evidence that suggests Gulf War veterans have an increase risk of developing MS.

- A study in the Annals of Neurology, for example identified 5,345 cases of MS among U.S. veterans that were deemed "service-connected." The number of service-connected cases was a significant increase from previous studies.

- An epidemiologic study found an unexpected, two-fold increase in MS between 1993 and 2000 in Kuwait, which suggests a potential environmental trigger for MS.

- Staff at the VA's MS Center of Excellence in Baltimore, MD, has noted the need to further study the increased incidence of MS among Gulf War veterans in particular.

- A 2004 report, entitled "Scientific Progress in Understanding Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses: report and Recommendations, "from a study group commissioned by the VA, suggests more research must be done on the potential link between MS and combat service.

- Approximately 25,000 veterans who are being treated at the VA have a diagnosis of MS; 5345 of the veterans' illnesses have been deemed "service-connected", as noted above.

Congressman Carnahan co-chairs the MS Caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives comprised of 116 Members and was awarded the National Multiple Sclerosis Society 2007 Representative of the Year Award.